

COLUMBIA RIVER REGIONAL FORUM

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

September 27, 2006 Meeting

FACILITATOR'S SUMMARY NOTES ON FUTURE ACTIONS

Facilitator: Robin Harkless

Notes: Erin Halton

The following notes are a summary of issues that are intended to point out future actions or issues that may need further discussion at upcoming meetings. These notes are not intended to be the "record" of the meeting, only a reminder for TMT members.

Adult Migration Update

Cindy LeFleur, WDFW, gave an update on the adult migration: through 9/25, numbers were still below the forecast, with the brights count over Bonneville at 219,000 (vs. predicted 263,000) and the tule count at 30,700 (vs. predicted 45,000.) The revised in-season forecast for upriver brights was 208,300, mid-Columbia brights at 64,500 and Bonneville Pool Hatchery at 34,700. LeFleur said the migration season will be winding down and that she will give an update on the adult migration counts at the next TMT meeting.

Lake Pend Oreille

Cathy Hlebechuk, COE, reminded the group that the delay in dropping the pool elevation at Lake Pend Oreille, proposed by IDFG at the 9/13 meeting, was fully accepted by TMT members. Melo Maiolie, IDFG, shared power point slides showing Lake Pend Oreille shoreline survey areas. Surveys for spawning will likely continue through the 1st week of October. Melo noted that these surveys are a qualitative look at trout spawning, and should provide more information on movement, depth and placement.

Next Steps: Maiolie will coordinate with Russ Kiefer, ID, on an update to TMT in late October or early November, and may also present at the TMT Year End Review Meeting on December 6th.

Albeni Falls Operations

Cathy Hlebechuk, COE, reported that the final Albeni Falls SOR was posted to the TMT web page on 9/15. Hlebechuk added that the Pend Oreille PUD and Box County Dam will do spill bay work next week, and requested that the COE maintain outflows at or below 28 kcfs until 10/15. Kyle Dittmer, CRITFC, said that dry weather is expected for the next two weeks, which will support the operation.

2006 -'07 Chum Research

Dave Wills, USFWS, showed Ken Tiffan's (USGS) proposed 2006-'07 chum study . The Corps will post it on the 9/27 agenda. Also, COE developed a statement of work

that estimates a \$140,000 cost for doing an unsteady flow analysis, and is in the process of determining where funding for the study may exist. Tony Norris, BOR, requested a copy of the proposal and agreed to see if there may be a cost-share opportunity.

Action/Next Steps: Wills will send a copy of the USGS scope to Norris, and the action agencies will review Ken's chum study proposal, to look for any 'red flags.'

End of MOP at Lower Granite

Cathy Hlebechuk, COE, said that the salmon managers reported significant cooling at Lower Granite (63.4-63.5 degrees), which signaled support for the end of MOP. The teletype was issued on 9/22, and the project is currently filling at night, as requested. John Day's minimum elevation for irrigation will end 9/30, and will operate at a range of 262.5 - 265'. Transport at McNary ended on 9/14, Lower Monumental is scheduled to end on 9/30, and Lower Granite and Little Goose will end on 10/31. Paul Wagner, NOAA, added that the Fall Chinook study was not expected to be impacted by end of transport at Lower Monumental.

2007 Water Management Plan

As of 9/27, NOAA had submitted changes to the draft WMP. TMT members are requested to review the draft and submit edits, additions, etc. based on expected 2007 operations, and submit them to Bernard Klatte, COE, as soon as possible.

ACTION: TMT members will review the document and send a "track changes" version to Klatte. All comments and a revised draft of the WMP will be posted on the TMT web page, for discussion at the next meeting.

Treaty Fishing SOR's

Kyle Dittmer, CRITFC, reported on the latest autumn treaty SOR, which requested hard constraints of 1' from full at John Day (range of 264.5 – 263.5), The Dalles (159.5 – 158.5) and Bonneville (76.5 – 75.5) pools. Dittmer said the net flight survey showed nets 43% at John Day, 25% at The Dalles, and 33-35% at Bonneville, and that there would likely be one more week of fishing, from 6 a.m. on 9/25 to 6 p.m. on 9/29.

Operations Review

Reservoirs: Grand Coulee was at elevation 1286.5'. Hungry Horse was at 3542' and releasing at 2.5 kcfs to meet Columbia Falls minimums. Libby was at elevation 2438' and will ramp down to a release rate of 6 kcfs on 9/29, and 4.4 kcfs on 10/1. Dworshak elevation was at 1519.8', releasing 1.5 kcfs. Lower Granite was in the range of 18.5-22 kcfs, and McNary average flows have been in the range of 64-110 kcfs. Don Faulkner, COE, said that Dworshak unit outages are scheduled for 10/10 and 11/14, to support available generation.

(NOTE: Hlebechuk sent out an email to TMT following the meeting that stated: "As discussed at TMT today, 2 daily outages are scheduled which take all 3 units out of service and the project will spill through one of the regulating outlets to maintain the

required minimum 1000 cfs. Most likely tdg will exceed 110% but there is always a chance it may not. Jim Adams has coordinated the spill with the State of Idaho and Nez Perce. The first outage is scheduled for October 10 from 0500 to 1700 hours. 115 KV line outage, breaker replacement. The second outage is schedule about November 14 from 0500 to 1700 hours. 500 kV line outage and XJ-7 open.”)

Fish: Paul Wagner, NOAA, reported that sub yearling numbers saw a slight increase at Lower Granite, and that adult passage numbers at Bonneville are down to 3-4,000 per day. Shad numbers are at a total of 3-4 million. Steelhead numbers have dropped to under 1500 per day, but overall are still above 2005 numbers (310,244 vs. 280, 860 last year.) Fall and Spring Chinook numbers are lower than the ten year average, with Fall Chinook at 254,000 (vs. 330,000) and Spring Chinook at 96,456 (vs. 151,682.)

Power: Nothing to report at this time.

Water quality: Laura Hamilton, COE, reported that the action agency is transitioning to winter monitoring: removal of forebay gauges and Cascade Island began the week of 9/17. The COE's year-end water quality monitoring review will be held on 10/23.

Next TMT Face-to-Face Meeting, October 25th, 9:00-noon

Agenda Items include:

- Treaty Fishing SOR
- End of Adult Migration
- Draft 2007 Water Management Plan/Comments Review
- Operations Review

Technical Management Team Meeting Notes

September 27, 2006

1. Greetings and Introductions.

Today's Technical Management Team meeting was chaired by Cathy Hlebechuk and facilitated by Robin Harkless. The following is a summary (not a verbatim transcript) of the topics discussed and decisions made at today's meeting. Anyone with questions or comments about these notes should contact Hlebechuk at 503-808-3942.

2. Adult Migration Update.

Cindy LeFleur led this presentation, touching on the following major topics:

- 2006 upriver bright adults passing Bonneville Dam: the pre-season prediction was 263,000, while the actual count through September 25 is 219,000. There has been a late surge of fish, LeFleur said, but the count is lagging behind the pre-season estimate by about 44,000. There was a commercial fishery downstream of Bonneville, which may help explain some of the discrepancy
- The pre-season tule (downriver or Spring Creek Hatchery component) forecast was 45,000; the actual count to date 31,000. This run is nearly over, but Spring Creek Hatchery has reached its escapement goal.
- Changes to the forecast based on actual counts: upriver bright forecast at river mouth vs. revised estimate. Bonneville pool hatchery: 35,000, down from 52,000. All fall chinook runs are about 20,000 below the pre-season estimates.

The pre-season estimate at Bonneville assumed some sort of reduction due to fishing between the mouth of the Columbia and the dam? Paul Wagner asked. Correct, LeFleur replied. In response to a question from Harkless, LeFleur said she will provide a further update at the October 11 TMT meeting.

3. Lake Pend Oreille Research on Trout Spawning.

Milo Maiolie of IDFG briefed the TMT on IDFG's lake trout spawning survey work in Lake Pend Oreille. We are trying to minimize the population of lake trout in Lake Pend Oreille, he explained; one of the reasons for drawing down the lake during the fall and winter is that IDFG hopes to expose lake trout eggs so that they don't hatch successfully. Maiolie touched on the following topic areas:

- Survey areas within the lake – last week and this week (maps).
- Lake trout are broadcast spawners – do not make redds. The survey looks for concentrations of fish, rather than redds.
- Next week's survey areas (map).
- Once the lake level recedes, IDFG personnel will begin turning over rocks to look for lake trout eggs. The survey will continue in 2007, when IDFG plans to sonic-tag lake trout so they can locate them within the lake. 2006 survey work will go through at least the first week in October. In past years, we have sampled females and found that they were pretty much out of eggs by the first week in October, Mioli said.

You'll be generating a mathematical assumption about the number of eggs killed? one participant asked. This year's work is more of a qualitative assessment of whether or not this strategy will result in lake trout eggs being left high and dry, Maiolie replied – we won't really know the effects of this operation on the year-class for another five years. It was agreed that IDFG will provide a further update on the 2006 research at the TMT's year-end review meeting in December.

4. Albeni Falls Winter Operation.

We sent out an email on September 15, once we had received the final SOR covering Albeni Falls winter operations, Hlebechuk said; as you will recall, we basically approved the lower lake level for this winter at the September 13 TMT meeting. That SOR is being implemented, she said, although we have been requested to hold flows no greater than 28 Kcfs through October 15 to accommodate some maintenance work at Box Canyon Dam.

5. 2006-'07 Chum Research Ideas.

This is basically a check-in to see whether the salmon managers would like to see anything different in the 2006-'07 chum research, Harkless said. We have discussed it, David Wills replied, and we have developed a memo outlining our research proposal, which is essentially a repeat of last year's work. It was agreed that the Corps will post this plan to the TMT September 27 agenda. I would ask the action agencies to look at it and let us know if there is anything that raises a concern, Wills said. We will do so, and will try to be as flexible as possible, said Robin MacKay.

Another research item that would be nice to finish up is the Corps' unsteady state flow model, said Wagner. I discussed that with Dennis Schwartz yesterday, said Wills; he has been tasked with trying to make that happen if possible. The Corps has developed a scope of work, and it looks like it will cost about \$140,000 to finish the model. Right now, they're in the process of trying to determine an appropriate funding source, Wills said – there may be opportunities to share the cost with the Fish and Wildlife Service. There is certainly support at the technical level for this work, he added.

6. Lower Granite – End of MOP.

Hlebechuk said MOP ended at Lower Granite on September 22, because significant cooling had occurred in the Lower Granite forebay. The TMT was notified by email. The project is filling at night only, as requested, but is not quite full. John Day will end it's 1 ½ foot above the elevation required for irrigation on September 30 – after that date, it will operate at 262.5-265 feet.

7. End of Transportation at McNary, Lower Monumental, Little Goose and Lower Granite.

McNary transport ended September 14, said Hlebechuk; the Fish Passage Plan says McNary and Lower Monumental will end transport on September 30, unless there are operational or biological reasons to end it sooner. McNary transport was stopped on September 14 due to large numbers of shad, and

Lower Monumental transport will end September 30. Little Goose and Lower Granite will end transport on October 31, as per the FPP, Hlebechuk said.

8. 2007 Water Management Plan.

The draft plan was posted on the TMT homepage last week, Harkless said; the Corps would like everyone to look at it and provide any comments they may have as soon as possible.

9. Treaty Fishing.

Kyle Ditter said CRITFC submitted a treaty fishing SOR covering the period September 25-29, requesting a one-foot operating range at Bonneville, the Dalles and John Day. Net flight survey results from last week showed 35% of the nets in Bonneville pool, 22% in The Dalles pool and 43% in John Day pool. There will likely be one more week of treaty fishing, next Tuesday-Friday. CRITFC will send over a new SOR later this afternoon, he said. Hlebechuk replied that the Corps will implement a hard constraint of a 1.5-foot operating range at Bonneville with a soft constraint of one foot. The other two projects are not constrained by the treaty fishing operation per the 1998 agreement between Col. Mogren and Ted Strong. Fish sales are continuing in Cascade Locks and elsewhere.

10. Operations Review.

The Corps reported that Libby will be ramping down to 6 Kcfs by September 29, following the BiOp ramp rates, starting tonight. It will ramp down to 4.4 Kcfs the night of October 1. Dworshak is at elevation 1519.8, releasing 1.5 Kcfs, minimum outflow. Over the past week, Lower Granite flow has averaged 18.5 Kcfs-22 Kcfs; at McNary, 64-110 Kcfs. There is an upcoming outage at Dworshak; there will be two days – October 10 and November 14 – when no generation will be available. During this period, Dworshak will spill minimum flow, which may cause some exceedences of the 110% TDG standard. They are changing breakers at Dworshak.

Wagner reported that the juvenile outmigration continues, with most of the action in subyearlings. We heard about the adult migration earlier in this meeting, he said; the counts picked up to 10,000 fish per day for awhile, but are now trending downward. Adult steelhead passage is also trending downward, to about 1,500 fish per day at Bonneville. There are copious numbers of shad passing Bonneville, currently. About 254,000 adult fall chinook have passed Bonneville to date, down from about 370,000 in 2005; the majority of the fish this year are four-year-olds. We weren't expected to have a stellar run in 2006, and we haven't, Wagner said. We've seen 310,000 adult steelhead, including 26% wild fish, in 2006, higher than both last year's count and the 10-year average.

BPA said there are no power system problems to report. The Corps said there are no water quality problems to report; the system is transitioning to its winter monitoring program. The 2006 monitoring results will be presented at a meeting on October 23.

11. Next TMT Meeting Date.

The next face-to-face meeting of the Technical Management Team was set for Wednesday, October 11. Meeting summary prepared by Jeff Kuechle. BPA contractor.

Name	Affiliation
Robin Harkless	Facilitation Team
Tony Norris	USBR
Robyn MacKay	BPA
Lynn Melder	COE
Cindy LeFleur	WDFW
Paul Wagner	NOAAF
Cathy Hlebechuk	COE
Ray Gonzales	COE
Tom Haymaker	PNGC
Randy Wortmann	COE
Scott Boyd	COE
Dan Spear	BPA
Kyle Dittmer	CRITFC
Milo Mioli	IDFG
Jeff Loughley	USBR
Russ George	WMCI
Bruce MacKay	Consultant
Tom Le	PSE
Margaret Filardo	FPC